

# Sam Houston State University

## Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program



**TRiO**

**PROGRAM MANUAL**

**2020 - 2021**

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## McNair Office Contact Information

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## Dr. Ronald E. McNair

Ronald E. McNair was born on October 21, 1950 in Lake City, South Carolina. He was the second son of Carl and Pearl McNair. He had two brothers, Carl and Eric. Ronald McNair's academic successes are laudable. After graduation from Carver High School in 1967, McNair attended North Carolina A&T State University, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Physics in 1971. Ronald's education did not end there; he was awarded a doctoral degree in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1976. In addition, McNair received three honorary doctorates: one in law from North Carolina A&T in 1978, one in science from Morris College in 1980, and another in science from the University of South Carolina in 1984. It is apparent that education was of extreme importance to him.

Ronald McNair was a member of several national organizations in science, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Physical Society (APS), the APS Committee on Minorities in Physics, the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics Board of Trustees, the MIT Corporation Visiting Committee, and Omega Psi Phi. He was also a visiting lecturer in physics at Texas Southern University. McNair received many honors and awards throughout his academic and professional career. He graduated *magna cum laude* from North Carolina A&T University; he was named a Presidential Scholar, a Ford Foundation Fellow, a National Fellowship Fund Fellow, and a NATO Fellow. He won the Distinguished National Scientist Award from the National Society of Black Professional Engineers and was named a Who's Who Among Black Americans. McNair also won several championships and medals in Karate, for which he held a 5<sup>th</sup> degree black belt, Karate's highest rank.

Ronald E. McNair was nationally recognized for his work in the field of laser physics. In 1978, he was one of 35 applicants selected from a pool of ten thousand for NASA's space shuttle program. After a one-year training and evaluation period, he was assigned as a mission specialist aboard the 1984 flight of the *Challenger*. He became the second African-American to fly in space. On Tuesday, January 28, 1986, Ronald McNair was killed along with his six fellow crew members aboard the *Challenger* when it exploded after launching from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. The crew members were F. R. Scobee, the pilot: Commander M. J. Smith, mission specialists: Lieutenant E.S. Onizuka and Dr. J.A. Resnik, and two civilian payload specialists: G. B. Jarvis, and S. C. McAuliffe. Ronald McNair was survived by his wife, Cheryl Moore and their two children, Reginald Ervin and Joy Cheray.

The Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program was established by the U.S. Department of Education in 1989 in honor of Dr. McNair's life, his accomplishments, and his contributions.

## Program Description and Eligibility Requirements

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is designed to provide talented low-income/first-generation and ethnic minority undergraduate students with effective preparation for doctoral study. The McNair Scholars Program at Sam Houston State University encourages graduate studies by providing opportunities for undergraduates to define their goals, engage in research, and develop the skills and faculty mentor relationships that are critical to success at the doctoral level.

### Eligibility Requirements

**For acceptance into the program, you must either:**

- Qualify as a first-generation college student (neither parent has attained a bachelor's degree) and meet low income guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Education;

**OR**

- Be a member of an ethnic group that is underrepresented in graduate education (the U.S. Government currently defines "underrepresented groups" specifically as Native American/Native Alaskan, Hispanic, African-American, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander).

**You must also:**

- Have U. S. citizenship or permanent U. S. residency.
- Have at least junior standing at SHSU at time of application.
- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher at SHSU.

## Scholar Benefits

- **\$2,000 research stipend**: Each scholar will be awarded a \$2,000 research stipend. It will be disbursed in three stipends during the academic year through the Financial Aid Office. The stipend will be disbursed as follows:

### **First Year**

\$800 at the end of Fall semester  
\$800 at the end of Spring semester  
\$400 at the end of Summer II semester

### **Second Year (and subsequent years)**

\$1,000 at the end of Fall semester  
\$1,000 at the end of Spring semester

- If semester requirements are not successfully completed, research stipends will not be disbursed or will be collected (if already disbursed). Also stipends will be applied to your BearKat One Account (through Financial Aid Office).
  - If you are over the allotted amount on financial aid, please let us know in advance as your stipend will likely be applied to your loan debt.
  - **In the summer, if you are not registered for summer classes, please let our staff know. This will affect when your summer stipend will be released.**
- **Tuition waiver for three-hour Spring research class**: The class (MCNR4301) will cover numerous aspects important to the process of conducting scholarly research. Information on qualitative and quantitative research is provided.
    - All other fees associated with the class are **NOT** waived.
    - The credit hours for the class serve as three elective credit hours.
  - **Travel to research conferences and graduate schools**: Scholars can attend one McNair research conference provided that the scholar orally presents their research at the conference. Scholars can also attend one graduate school visit. This is a discretionary decision made by the Director, depending on scholar's fulfillment of program requirements and available budget at the time of travel.

Scholars who are interested in travel must meet with the Director *45 days* in advance to the estimated travel date. NO EXCEPTIONS! Please see Coordinator or the McNair website for required travel paperwork.

- **Personal mentoring:** The McNair program employs a graduate student mentor to assist students through the process of attaining a doctoral degree. Students are also individually paired with a faculty mentor in their department, with whom they will develop and complete a research project and develop a strong mentoring relationship.
  
- **Other Benefits:**
  - Tutoring (referral will be made when needed)
  - Graduate application fee waivers (list of programs can be found on our website)
  - Help with preparation for graduate entrance exam (GRE/GMAT)
  - Fall and Summer Workshops: See Workshop Calendars
  - Use of laptops while in the program
  - McNair Office Lending Library

# Program Requirements

The goal of the McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is to provide its scholars with effective preparation for doctoral study. This includes extensive training in conducting research and assistance with the graduate school application process. To ensure the goals of the program are met, McNair scholars will be required to fulfill specific responsibilities each semester.

**\* Program Requirements will vary depending on graduation dates. If semester requirements are not successfully completed, research stipends will not be disbursed or will be collected if already disbursed. \***

## **Year 1: Fall Semester Requirements\***

- Attend ALL mandatory workshops and make-up any missed workshops.
- Meet with Graduate Mentor once a month.
- Attend McNair welcome ceremony and other group functions.
- Choose a faculty mentor by December 1.
- Maintain a 3.0 overall GPA.

## **Year 1: Spring Semester Requirements\***

- Satisfactorily complete three-credit hour research course.
- Submit a research action plan (RAP) by January 31.
- Meet with graduate mentor once a month.
- Meet with faculty mentor twice a month and submit bi-weekly progress reports.
- Attend McNair group functions.
- Maintain a 3.0 overall GPA.

## **Year 1: Summer Semester Requirements\***

- Collaborate with faculty mentor on research and meet weekly with faculty mentor.
- Submit weekly progress reports.
- Attend mandatory weekly research meetings and complete ALL requirements for summer research program.
- Attend and present research project at annual SHSU McNair Research Conference.
- Complete GRE/GMAT prep course by the end of the summer/end of fall semester.
- Maintain a 3.0 overall GPA.

## **Year 2: Fall Semester Requirements\***

- Submit completed McNair research project in manuscript form by December 1 or May 1.
- Continue to meet with faculty mentor and make satisfactory progress toward completion of project.
- Submit copies of GRE scores.
- Turn in applications to at least five graduate programs.
- Meet with Graduate Mentor once a month.

## **Year 2: Spring Semester Requirements\***

- Present research project at a McNair conference or a regional/national conference in your discipline.
- Meet with Graduate Mentor once a month.
- Complete exit interview with Director.

## **Future Semesters\***

- Maintain contact with and report any educational changes to McNair Office (required for tracking purposes).



## Fall Semester 2020

Date	Time	Location	Topic
October 15, 2020	4:30 pm-6:00 pm	Zoom	Orientation – Cohort 18
October 21, 2020	5:00 pm-7:00 pm	TBD	Graduate School Application Process
October 28, 2020	5:00 pm-7:00 pm	TBD	GRE Preparation & Grad School Funding
November 4, 2020	5:00 pm-7:00 pm	TBD	Curriculum Vita & Personal Statement
November 18, 2020	5:00 pm-7:00 pm	TBD	Interviewing
November 23/24, 2020	TBD	Zoom	Library research tutorial
December 2, 2020	5:00 pm-7:00 pm	TBD	Etiquette (dining, email, phone, etc.)

**\*Note: all workshops are required! You must be excused by Dr. Fox if you need to miss a workshop.**

## Spring Semester 2021

### **McNair 4301**

The research class will be held during the Spring semester, typically on Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00am – 12:20 pm. The class will cover numerous aspects important to the process of conducting scholarly research. Information on qualitative and quantitative research is provided. Tuition is paid for the class; however, neither the University nor the McNair Scholars Program is able to pay for fees. Therefore, fees will have to be paid by the student. The credit hours for the class serve as three elective credit hours.

## Summer Semester 2021

During the summer research internship, McNair Scholars will conduct an independent research project under the supervision of their faculty mentor. Scholars are expected to devote time each week to their research from June through August. At least once a week, scholars are required to meet (in person or over email or Zoom) with their faculty mentor to discuss and direct the research. Scholars will meet with the Graduate Mentor as a group every week for seven weeks to prepare for the summer research conference. **For every meeting that is missed, \$100 will be deducted from the scholar's summer research stipend.**

In the fall semester, the research findings will be compiled, analyzed, and written for peer review for presentation at a student conference and/or submission to a professional journal. Scholars will also present their research at the annual SHSU McNair Program Research Conference. Scholars are expected to submit a final manuscript to the McNair Program by December 1/May 1 of their graduating year.

## Travel

### **Travel to Research Conferences and Graduate School Visits**

**Scholars can attend one McNair research conference provided that the scholar orally presents their research at the conference.** Scholars can also attend one graduate school visit. This is a discretionary decision made by the McNair director depending on scholar's fulfillment of program requirements and available budget at the time of travel. Scholars who are interested in travel must meet with the McNair director **45 days** in advance. NO EXCEPTIONS! Please visit the McNair website for required paperwork. (The paperwork is under *Assignments and Forms* and *Travel*.)

### **Travel Receipts**

Within **three** business days after your return, you must submit all original travel receipts, as well as a Travel Summary Form of the events, occurrences, and accomplishments of this visit. Please keep and submit all of your receipts and remaining travel funds. You will be responsible for all expenses for which you do not have receipts. If you have any questions, please ask the Program Coordinator.

## Research Materials and Supplies

The McNair Program works to ensure that its scholars are equipped with the materials needed to conduct their research including the following:

- Laptops: As a McNair Scholar, you will be allowed to check out a laptop during the time that you are in the program. NO software will be allowed to be downloaded by the scholar. ALL the programs needed to do academic and research work will be already downloaded on the laptops.
- McNair Lending Library: Students can check out books while in the McNair program. Here is a list of some of the books we currently have:
  - GRE Test Prep books
  - Writing style manuals
  - Variety of university graduate school program manuals
  - Tips and tools on publishing research
  - Other textbooks you may need for your research
- Newton Gresham Library: At the library McNair Scholar have the following opportunities:
  - Interlibrary Loan: If you need interlibrary loan articles, obtain the invoice for the articles from the library and turn it in to the McNair Office. We will then the library directly for the loan expenses.
  - Photo Copies: If you need to make copies for your research project, go to the Library Copy Center and inform them that you are a McNair Scholar (SHSU I.D. will be required). They will give you a copy card that you are to return after you have finished making your copies. The limit is 30 pages.
  - Study Carrels: Study Carrels are issued to the McNair Program every semester. Please inform the Director of your intention to use a study carrel as they are taken up early in the semester.
- Research Materials: If you need to purchase any materials for your research (questionnaires, scoring materials, Scantrons, etc.), please turn in a request in writing, including the exact materials you need, quantity, and estimated price. The form is found on our website under Forms and must be signed by your mentor.

## Campus Resources

Below are a few campus resources that, in addition to McNair services, may assist with writing papers, with classes and other academic assignments.

- **Academic and Mentoring Center (SAM):** offers academic advisement and enrichment services, including study skills sessions, to all undergraduate and graduate students. CHSS, Room 170 & 190, 294-4444
- **Writing Center:** generating ideas for essays and teaching skills for organizing, proofing, and editing papers; promotes the acquisition of and use of specific reading strategies to promote independent learning. Farrington 111, 294-3680. Requires appointment.
- **Math Center:** promotes the learning of mathematics in order to achieve academic success. Farrington 104, 294-3680
- **Library Reference:** Newton Gresham Library; 294-1614
- **Library Circulation:** Newton Gresham Library; 294-1599;
- **Financial Aid:** Graduate Counselor; Estill Building 218; 294-1774

## Guidelines

We believe that our McNair Scholars are competent and professional students. As such, scholars are expected to be punctual in meeting deadlines, attending meetings, classes, and workshops and to display exceptional behavior while representing Sam Houston State University and the McNair Program. In the rare case that scholars do not behave in a professional manner, they will be held accountable for their actions. The following sanctions will be implemented to correct inappropriate behaviors. In addition, these policies also serve to protect individuals affiliated with the program and to ensure that everyone is treated in a just and fair manner.

### **Attendance and Participation--Scholars are expected to:**

- Attend **ALL** McNair meetings, beginning with the orientation and ending with the Final Research Presentation.
- Complete **ALL** forms, paperwork, and other documents within the times specified by the Director.
- Attend mandatory classes and workshops.
- Successfully complete three-hour course.
- Complete GRE/GMAT preparatory workshop.
- Participate in **ALL** McNair scheduled events.

### **Research Tasks--Scholars are expected to:**

- Select a faculty mentor by December 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Meet with the Graduate Mentor once a month.
- Understand that the faculty mentor has the right and responsibility to see that scholars' weekly research time is well-spent
- Submit a copy of research timeline to the McNair Director prior to conducting the research.
- Meet with their faculty mentor at least twice a week during Fall and Spring semesters and once a week during the Summer. If the mentor is out of town, then scholars should meet with the assigned proxy. Scholars are responsible for informing the McNair office if no contact has been made with their mentor for at least two weeks.
- Participate in an oral presentation of the final research project.
- Submit final research document by the last week of the research program (according to the McNair Program guidelines, the deadline is December 1<sup>st</sup>).

### **Senior year & Post-Graduation--Scholars are expected to:**

- Submit photocopied evidence of applications to at least three graduate programs.
- Submit photocopied evidence of graduate school admission, as well as documentation regarding financial support while in graduate school.
- Submit photocopied evidence of graduate admission exam results (e.g., GRE, GMAT).
- Cooperate with all annual follow-up surveys in a timely fashion. This

includes notifying the director of changes in address or educational status for long-term tracking.

- Keep in contact, on at least an annual basis, with the Director, understanding that participation in this program is a life-long commitment.

**Examples of unacceptable behavior include:**

- Inappropriate behavior toward McNair staff or fellow scholars at conferences, graduate school visits, and other functions sponsored by the McNair Program. This includes insubordination, leaving a conference area without permission from a staff member, disorderly conduct, and failure to follow directions.
- Bringing illegal non-prescription drugs or illegal controlled substances on a McNair sponsored trip or event.
- Malicious or untruthful behavior toward a staff member or another student.
- Consumption of alcohol at McNair sponsored functions by individuals under 21.
- Willful damage to McNair property and/or equipment.
- Failure to return McNair laptop and equipment by a specified time and in acceptable condition.
- Failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA
- Reneging on agreements to attend conferences, trips, etc. sponsored by the McNair Program.
- Failure to submit your research paper to fulfill program requirement and publication purposes by the deadline.
- Illegal use of services (e.g., personal long distance phone calls in McNair Office).
- Non-attendance after acceptance of an invitation to an event for which the McNair Program was charged.
- Failure to attend any of the mandatory workshops, required GRE classes, or any other mandatory McNair event.
- Two unexcused absences or late submissions of paperwork, assignments, etc.
- Accidental damage of McNair Program property.
- Failure to return McNair Program materials (e.g., lending library books, laptop computers).

Violations of these policies will be dealt with on an individual basis. The McNair staff and Principal Investigator reserve the right to require compensation for damaged property, withhold research stipends at the end of each semester, request that a portion or the entire stipend amount be returned, and deny privileges and/or access to McNair events and activities, including conferences, graduate school visits, and other sponsored trips.

More serious violations can result in temporary or extended probation, prohibition of McNair services and resources, refusal to write letters of recommendation, and/or dismissal from the program. Probationary periods will last until the violation is corrected to the satisfaction of the McNair Program. All rules and regulations are subject to review and are at the discretion of the Principal Investigator and McNair Staff and are not limited to the examples given above.

**\*The McNair Scholars Program reserves the right to update this manual at any time.\***